



Montana Main Street A Case Study Design

Tree Planting Project Butte, Montana



In the process of community forums, a recurring theme from Butte citizens has been the need for more greenery, especially trees, to enhance the appearance of Uptown Butte to residents and visitors alike. Mainstreet Uptown Butte's Design Committee seized on the idea to help advance its own efforts to follow the Main Street Approach by cleaning up and greening up Butte's historic district.

The Main Street program was encouraged in this effort by its primary funding source, the Urban Revitalization Agency. Long-time citizen advocate Don Ulrich was then Chairman of the URA Board of Directors and was a steadfast advocate for trees and flowers with a stubborn vision that, despite Butte's reputation as a dirty and desolate industrial city, the city could bloom like any other Montana city. Don Ulrich died in 2004 and Mainstreet dedicated its efforts to planting 200 trees in his honor. Since then, Mainstreet Uptown Butte has planted more than 250 trees on the streets of Uptown Butte.

The focus for the planting efforts for the first three years has been entryway streets to Butte's historic district to enhance the entrances to Uptown Butte. A group of volunteers has selected species, arranged with nurseries to order trees, and arranged for donations of soil and compost. Mainstreet Uptown Butte has solicited contributions to purchase trees from local corporations and businesses. The County contributed with sidewalk cuts for many trees and a work crew to help on planting days. The tree planting effort has been very popular and on entryway streets to the historic district they have already, in their first seasons, provided a softer edge to a harsh industrial landscape.

Realizing that Butte's climate requires careful maintenance for trees, Mainstreet Uptown Butte wrote a proposal to fund a city forester position to care for the plants during the summer. The successful proposal, funded through cooperative agreement with different county departments, has led to regular watering of the new trees and an acceptance that Butte needs an expanded and aggressive reforestation effort in coming years. Mainstreet Uptown Butte is now evaluating its tree planting efforts to decide if members wish to expand into residential areas. They have also undertaken a corresponding effort to green up lots and upgrade planted areas in the historic area in cooperation with the Chamber of Commerce Civic Improvement Committee, the Butte Garden Study Group and other civic groups with a goal of seeing Butte bloom.

For more details about Mainstreet Uptown Butte's design efforts, visit <http://www.mainstreetbutte.org>.

For more information on the Montana Main Street Program, call 406-841-2756